information technology and the accompanying social and cultural changes have initiated a shift toward greater interaction and collaboration in the relationships among information users, information disclosers, and government.

Although the authors claim that the basis of their extensive and multitiered analysis is 18 policy cases—15 domestic and three international—they subject only eight domestic cases to the full dissection that generates most of their insights and policy prescriptions. Most generally, targeted transparency policies succeed when they are "user-centered" and effective when they gain "in use, accuracy, and scope over time" (p. 11). Policy success and effectiveness in this area are also dependent on the peculiar "action cycle" that the authors have adeptly distilled: Mandated information disclosure intitiates information user perceptions, calculations, and actions, which in turn generates information discloser perceptions, calculations, and actions. Ideally, the feedback on both user and discloser perceptions and actions should guide refinements in the information disclosure mandate.

Perhaps the core analytical insight is the authors' notion of "embeddedness." Transparency policies are successful when users perceive value in the disclosed information and find it both compatible with their decision-making routines and easily comprehensible. This embedding in the decision making of users is only half the battle, however. The responses of information users must also become embedded in the decision making of disclosers in similar fashion. Disclosers must see the responses of users as affecting core organizational goals, compatible with organizational decision routines, and comprehensible.

The authors are not shy about advancing prescriptions for both policy design and political management of the design process, and it is here that readers may find a reason or two to harbor reservations. First and foremost, the methodological constraints of a study based on a limited set of cases, which the authors readily acknowledge, make their conclusions about policy success more defensible as hypotheses to be tested with further research than as definitive generalizations. Second, their assessment of the political challenges of crafting effective transparency policy to begin with, and then of assuring its sustainability, is based on the categorization of this kind of policy as one generating perceptions of concentrated costs for disclosers and widely dispersed benefits for users. This elicits "entrepreneurial" policy politics, in James Q. Wilson's parlance, but the authors give insufficient attention to an understanding of the factors that will draw policy entrepreneurs to the challenge of creating transparency policy, and more important, sustaining their attention to policy maintenance and improvement over the long term.

Of their eight core policy cases, the authors categorize three as highly effective, three as moderately effective, and two as failures. In a complex, diverse, and highly fractious policymaking environment, this is a remarkable result achieved with virtually no centralized executive orchestration of the sort our political system seems so enamored with lately. This rich, carefully researched, well balanced, and readily accessible study shows us that good governance, with legislators at the local, state, or national levels in the lead, is surely difficult but far from unattainable. This is hard-nosed scholarship demonstrating, as the authors themselves discovered, that pragmatism about both policy expectations and policy results should prevail among political leaders and citizens alike.

Devolution and Black State Legislators. By Tyson King-Meadows and Thomas F. Schaller. Albany: SUNY Press, 2006. 302p. $85.00 cloth, $29.95 paper.
DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707072441

— Quentin Kidd, *Christopher Newport University*

It has been nearly a half century since the Civil Rights era, and there are today hundreds of black state legislators in the United States. Until now, however, no comprehensive examination of their contemporary legislative influence has been conducted. The need for such a study is clear, and Tyson King-Meadows and Thomas Schaller's research—part of the SUNY Series in African American Studies—is rooted in an interesting set of political trends. Since the Reagan Revolution of the early 1980s and the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, devolution (or new federalism) has pushed much power and many resources (though some would argue not enough resources) to the states. At the same time, since the early 1980s the number of black state legislators has increased substantially. The authors want to know whether these two trends have resulted in greater real (as opposed to symbolic or descriptive) representation of African American interests in state policy. They suggest that the answer generally is that it has not.

This study is soundly developed, and the narrative reads easily because the authors' descriptive and empirical analysis is woven together very well. King-Meadows and Schaller draw on a diverse set of both quantitative and qualitative data, including interviews with many black legislators. The writing is clear and coherent, chapters are organized logically, and the methodology is generally sound. Where there are potential questions with the operationalization and measurement of variables (such as in Chapter 6 with the operationalization of black political incorporation at the state level), the authors are clear and frank about the limitations of their work. The book is divided into eight chapters, but three main points emerge from the project as a whole.

First, the authors show that contemporary black legislators are a rather monolithic group who came into office at a time when Republicans were ascendant (Reagan's revolution, the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, and the election of many Republican governors around the country) and when conservative principles both fiscally

and socially were dominant. As a group they, like their white counterparts, do not look like the people they represent. Black legislators are members of the political, social, and economic elite. Most are from the South, most are Democrats, and most are highly educated with law, business, and education making up the largest occupational categories. They represent districts that are mostly urban, very geographically dense, and far less advantaged (in terms of socioeconomic status) than they are.

Second, the authors show that while black legislators vote rather cohesively on legislation that directly affects their constituents, such as that related to crime and punishment, economic development, and welfare-to-work reform, white legislators who also represent racial minorities are less likely to vote as cohesively with them on these issues. King-Meadows and Schaller argue that while not predictive, racial identity acts as a powerful influence on black legislative roll-call voting behavior, but at the same time, black legislative caucuses are not very effective at building coalitions beyond that point. The apparent discord between black and white legislators on bills important to both their constituents, and to the black legislators particularly, is in part what helps explain the ineffectiveness of black legislative caucuses at the state level. The other factors that limit the effectiveness of black legislative caucuses are the legislative context of the state and the size of the caucus. As the authors show, in states where the black legislative caucus is small and the legislative context is restrictive, it is more difficult for black legislators to build meaningful coalitions and thus the promotion and protection of black interests is difficult at best. However, in states where the black legislative caucus is large(r) and the legislative context is less restrictive, it is easier for black legislators to build meaningful coalitions, and thus the promotion and protection of black interests is easier.

Third, the authors use the particular case of welfare reform to show how difficult it is for black state legislators to exercise power over a policy area in the age of devolution. Because welfare reform affects their constituents more than most, black state legislators have a vested interest in seeing it work at the state level. Yet, finding strong empirical evidence of successful black legislative influence on state expenditures for particular programs or categories of welfare most associated with African American interests is difficult at best. Instead, the authors show that a state's political context and economic condition have a much stronger influence on the course of welfare policy than does black legislative power.

King-Meadows and Schaller conclude that devolution has not resulted in increased power in areas of policy where black legislators would have been expected to find it. In order to benefit from the opportunity presented to black state legislators by devolution, those legislators and their constituents have to recognize and exploit the opportunity, which they have not done. In addition, while black state legislators are having a hard time exploiting opportunities to shape public policies (such as those concerning welfare policies), they are increasingly taking the blame for those policies when they go bad. Such are the dangers of devolution, the authors conclude, and they will shape the future of black state politics.

Devolution and Black State Legislators is a valuable contribution to the study of state politics, African American politics, welfare policy, and devolution (or new federalism), and is highly recommended to scholars of these fields as well as for graduate courses in these fields.

White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism. By Kevin M. Kruse. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. 352p. $35.00 cloth, $18.95 paper.
DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707072453

— Kimberley S. Johnson, *Barnard College*

The South is a region of many myths, and Kevin Kruse takes on one of the most durable of them: Atlanta as the "city too busy to hate." Kruse finds that Atlanta, like many other southern and northern cities in the postwar era, was a city in which "race and residence stood at the forefront of [Atlanta's] racial politics" (p. 42). He traces the ultimately unsuccessful efforts of Mayor William Hartsfield's biracial, elite-controlled regime to manage the struggle between whites and blacks over urban space. White flight, the decades-long movement of whites to the Atlanta suburbs, was not only the result of this struggle over space; it was also the source of a new form of southern white conservatism based on whites' resentful exit from the urban South. For political scientists, this book is a reminder of the "long civil rights movement," that began in the 1940s, before the *Brown* decision, and extended throughout the 1970s. At the local level, the Civil Rights movement was a struggle over politics that earlier political scientists would be quick to understand and appreciate: a struggle over who gets what, when, where, and how. By taking an in-depth yet rigorous look at southern politics that goes beyond the limitations of National Election Study data or roll-call votes, the book provides valuable historical context to recent works on the transformation of southern politics.

In Kruse's skillful hands, Atlanta's struggle over integration takes on many of the characteristics of low-level urban warfare: Block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood, white lower middle- and working-class Atlantans battled their African American counterparts in a conflict over control of urban space. Occasionally there were spectacular public displays of power and resistance to these changes in the shape of the Columbians (and former World War II vets), as well as, not surprisingly, the Ku Klux Klan. More often than not, the warfare was on a lower scale, in the shape of psychological skirmishes, from neighbor to neighbor and from church congregation to church congregation, as whites tried to build a collective and "respectable"